

CLASS:--12TH. Part-II: CHAPTER 3.

An imperial capital Vijayanagara

History

Revision Notes

Key concepts in nutshell

- **The Rayas, Nayakas and Sultans** – Harihara and Bukka asserted their independence of the Delhi sultanate and established the kingdom of Vijaynagar on AD 1336.
- **Kings and trading class** – The warfare depended mainly upon powerful cavalry. The Portuguese settled on the west coast of India in attempted to establish their trading and military stations.
- **The climax and decline of Vijay Nagar empire** – Krishadeva Raya was an able administrator, He built dams for irrigation. He builds magnificent places and temples. Its ruler Rama Raya was miserably defeated on the battlefield of (Rakshasi – Tangadi) Talikota in A.D.1565. The victorious armies plundered and destroyed the city of Vijaynagar.
- **Vijaynagar Hampi Architecture** – The Vijaynagar architecture (Hampi Architecture) of the period (1336-1365) was unique building style evolved by the imperial Vijaynagar empire.
- **Hampi Bazar** – Portuguese travellers Paes and Nuntiz visited Hampi in the mid 1500 century. They give an account of Hampi Bazar thus “in this street lived many merchants and there you will find all sorts of rubies, diamonds pearls and cloths that you may wish to buy.
- **Building and places** – we know today about the Vijaynagar palaces and buildings are derived from the archeological excavations at Hampi as no royal palace structures have survived.
- **Kings royal enclosure** – Another important building at Hampi is the kings royal enclosure. Paes tells against the gate there were two circles in which there were the dancing women richly arrayed with many jewels of gold and diamonds and many pearls.

- **Mahanavami dibba** – The Mahanavami dibba is located on one of the highest points in the city. It is a very large platform rising from a base of about 11000 feet to height of a 40 feet. It seems that is supported a wooden structure.
- **Forts of Vijay nagar** – in the constant struggle for power, fort and fortified settlements were a potent symbol of authority. The rulers of Vijaynagar empire created the cities with the main object of protection against invasions. The city itself was a fortress and designed as such in every manner.
- **Vijayanagara or “city of victory”** was the name of the both a city and an empire. The empire was founded in the fourteenth century.
- In 1565 the city was sacked and subsequently deserted.
- One of the most prominent water work to be seen among the ruins in the Hiriya canal.
- In terms of temple architecture, by this period certain new features were in evidence.
- Best exemplified by the raya gopurams or royal gate ways that often dwarfed the towers on the central shrines, and signaled the presence of the temple from a great distance.
- The halls in the temple were used for a variety of purposes.
- Buildings that survive tell us about the way spaces were organized and used, how they were built, with what materials and techniques.

History of Vijayanagara

Vijayanagara or “city of victory” was the name of both a city and an empire. The empire was founded in the fourteenth century. In 1565 the city was sacked and subsequently deserted. Although it fell into ruin in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries it remained in the memories of people living in the Krishna-Tungabhadra doab, as Hampi, a name derived from that of the local mother goddess, Pampadevi.

1. **The Discovery of Hampi:** The ruins at Hampi were brought to light in 1800 by an engineer and antiquarian named Colonel Colin Mackenzie. An employee of the English East India Company, he prepared the first survey map of the site. Much of the initial information he received was based on the memories of priests of the Virupaksha temple and the shrine of Pampadevi.

2. **Rayas, Nayakas and Sultans:** According to tradition and epigraphic evidence two brothers, Harihara and Bukka, founded the Vijayanagara Empire in 1336. This empire included within its fluctuating frontiers peoples who spoke different languages and followed different religious traditions. The Vijayanagara kings competed with contemporary rulers – including the Sultans of the Deccan and the Gajapati rulers of Orissa – for control of the fertile river valleys. The rulers of Vijayanagara, who called themselves rayas.
3. The warfare depended mainly upon powerful cavalry. The Portuguese settled on the west coast of India in attempted to establish their trading and military stations.
4. **Trade in Vijaynagar:** Vijayanagara was also noted for its markets dealing in spices, textiles and precious stones. Trade was often regarded as a status symbol for such cities, which boasted of a wealthy population that demanded high-value exotic goods, especially precious stones and jewellery.
5. The climax and decline of Vijaynagar empire:
 1. The first dynasty, known as the Sangama dynasty, exercised control till 1485. They were supplanted by the Saluvas, who were replaced by the Tuluvas in 1503.
 2. Krishnadeva Raya belonged to the Tuluva dynasty. His rule was characterised by expansion and consolidation.
 3. Krishnadeva Raya is credited with building some fine temples and adding impressive gopurams to many important south Indian temples.
 4. Strain began to show within the imperial structure following Krishnadeva Raya's death in 1529. His successors were troubled by rebellious nayakas or military chiefs.
 5. During this period, as indeed earlier, the military ambitions of the Deccan Sultanates resulted in shifting alignments. Eventually this led to an alliance of the Sultanates against Vijayanagara.
 6. Although the armies of the Sultans were responsible for the destruction of the city of Vijayanagara, relations between the Sultans and the rayas were not always or inevitably hostile.

7. In fact the Vijayanagara kings were keen to ensure the stability of the Sultanates and vice versa.